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Filed : February 19, 2002

### REMARKS

Claim 1 has been canceled without prejudice. Claim 3 has been amended, and support can be found in Figs. 12, 13, 15, and 16-24, for example. Claim 5 has been amended, and support can be found in Figs. 1-3, for example. Claim 7 has been amended, and support can be found in Figs. 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 15, 24, and 25, for example. Claim 9 has been amended, and support can be found in Figs. 17(a) and (b), for example. Claim 10 has been amended, and support can be found in Figs. 19-24, for example. Claim 15 has been amended, and support can be found in Figs. 27-32, for example. Claim 16 has been amended, and support can be found in Figs. 33-35 and 43-45, for example. Claim 19 has been amended, and support can be found in Figs. 37-41, for example. No new matter has been added. Applicant respectfully requests entry of the amendments and reconsideration of the application in view of the amendments and the following remarks.

#### Claim Objections

Claims 6, 9, and 10 have been objected to because of the word "encircles" which should be --encircle--. Please note that Claims 7, 9, 10, and 15 included this error. This objection should not apply to Claim 6, but should additionally apply to Claims 7 and 15. Claims 7, 9, 10, and 15 have been amended to correct the error, thereby obviating this objection.

#### Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 7-15 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Smith (US 2800867). Claims 7, 9, 10, and 15 are independent and have been amended. These amended claims could not be anticipated by Smith.

Claim 7 recites: (a) the edge portions are formed on a first portion of the inner circumferential surface of the frame, and (b) male screw members are provided on a second portion of the inner circumferential surface of the frame. Figs. 5-7 show an embodiment.

In contrast, in Smith, no edge portions are formed. Thus, at least for this reason, Claim 7 could not be anticipated by Smith.

Claim 9 recites: (a) each movement blocking body is supported in the frame and has a pair of edge portions and a top surface with rounded edges. Figs. 7(a) and (b) show an

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embodiment. Due to the pair of edge portions and the top surface's rounded edges, when the pipe body moves, the blocking body slightly rotates and the edge portions function as wedges, thereby effectively blocking the movement of the pipe body.

In contrast, in Smith, the blocking member is not supported in the frame and does not have a pair of edge portions. Further, the blocking member does not have a top surface with rounded edges. Thus, at least for this reason, Claim 9 could not be anticipated by Smith.

Claim 10 recites: (a) the arc-shaped edge portions are formed on the inner circumferential surface of the receiving portion. Figs. 19-23 show embodiments, wherein the arc-shaped edge portion (44) are formed on the inner circumferential surface.

In contrast, in Smith, no edge portions are formed. Further, the member (38) is not formed on any inner surface of the frame. Thus, at least for this reason, Claim 10 could not be anticipated by Smith.

Claim 15 recites: (a) each movement blocking body has one or three or more edge portions, only which are in contact with an outer surface of the pipe body. Figs. 27-32 show embodiments.

In contrast, in Smith, the movement blocking body has no edge portions. Thus, at least for this reason, Claim 15 could not be anticipated by Smith.

In view of the foregoing, Claims 7-15 could not be anticipated by Smith. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of this rejection.

#### Rejection of Claims 1 and 3 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1 and 3 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Smith in view of Malani (US 5772252). Claim 1 has been canceled without prejudice. Claim 3 has been amended. Claim 3 as amended herein could not be obvious over the above references.

Claim 3 recites: (a) edge portions are formed on an inner surface of the frame for receiving one radial side of the pipe, and (b) wedge bodies for pressing the other radial side of the pipe through the frame. Figs. 12, 13, 15, and 16-24 show embodiments.

In contrast, in Smith, no edge portions are formed on an inner surface of the frame. Also in Malani, no edge portions are formed on an inner surface of the frame. Thus, a combination of

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Smith and Malani could not lead to Claim 3. At least for this reason, Claim 3 could not be obvious over the above references. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of this rejection.

Rejection of Claims 5, 6, and 16-22 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 5, 6, and 16-22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Christie (US 3966528) in view of Smith. Claims 5, 16, and 19 are independent and have been amended. These amended claims could not be obvious over the above references.

Claim 5 recites: (a) a pipe supporting portion rises vertically from the mounting seat portion, and (b) the mounting seat portion, the pipe supporting portion, and the rib are rigidly integrally formed. Fig. 3 shows an embodiment, wherein the pipe supporting portion (15) rises vertically from the mounting seat portion (14); and the mounting seat portion (14), the pipe supporting portion (15), and the rib (16) are rigidly integrally formed.

In contrast, in Christie, the pipe supporting portion (10) does not rise vertically from the mounting seat portion (21). Further, the mounting seat portion (21), the pipe supporting portion (10), and the rib (20) are not rigidly integrally formed. Smith is irrelevant to the above features. Thus, a combination of Christie and Smith could not lead to Claim 5. At least for this reason, Claim 5 could not be obvious over the above references.

Claim 16 recites: (a) the mounting seat portion, the pipe supporting portion, and the rib are rigidly integrally formed. Figs. 33 and 34 show an embodiment, wherein the mounting seat portion (14), the pipe supporting portion (55), and the rib (16) are rigidly integrally formed.

In contrast, in Christie, the mounting seat portion (21), the pipe supporting portion (10), and the rib (20) are not rigidly integrally formed. Smith is irrelevant to the above features. Thus, a combination of Christie and Smith could not lead to Claim 16. At least for this reason, Claim 16 could not be obvious over the above references.

Claim 19 recites: (a) the mounting seat portion, the pipe supporting portion, and the rib are rigidly integrally formed. Figs. 37 and 38 show an embodiment, wherein the mounting seat portion (14), the pipe supporting portion (55), and the rib (16) are rigidly integrally formed.

In contrast, in Christie, the mounting seat portion (21), the pipe supporting portion (10), and the rib (20) are not rigidly integrally formed. Smith is irrelevant to the above features. Thus,

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a combination of Christie and Smith could not lead to Claim 19. At least for this reason, Claim 19 could not be obvious over the above references.

In view of the foregoing, Claims 5, 6, and 16-22 could not be obvious over the above references. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of this rejection.

### CONCLUSION

In light of the Applicant's amendments to the claims and the foregoing Remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any remaining concerns which might prevent the prompt allowance of the application, the Examiner is respectfully invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number appearing below.

Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: July 8, 2005

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